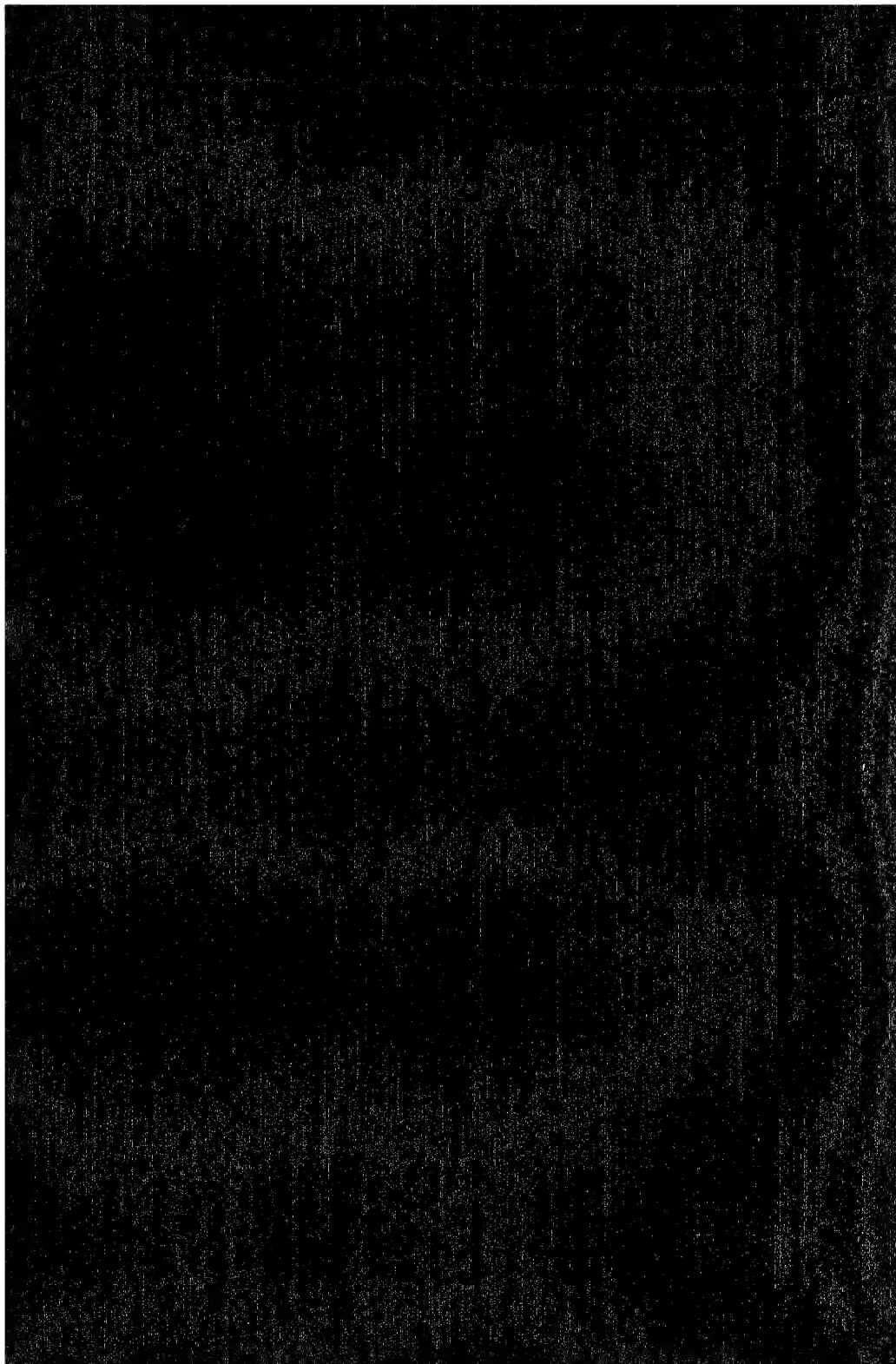


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# Canadian Poems

*nineteen thirty-seven*



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Canadian Authors' Association  
Calgary Branch.

Competition conducted by Poetry  
Group of the Calgary Branch  
of the Canadian Authors'  
Association



## Preface

On October 15, 1937, the closing date for the contest held by the Poetry Group of the Calgary Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association, the committee reported a total of 1,126 entries, divided as follows: 130 Sonnets, 278 Lyrics, 139 poems in Free Verse, 466 Short Poems any form, and 113 poems on a Canadian Theme. Every province of Canada was represented. There were 409 contestants.

The Group were fortunate in having as their judges Mr. F. E. L. Priestley, formerly head of the English Department of Mount Royal College, Calgary, now at Toronto University; Professor Joseph Fisher of Victoria College, Toronto; and Dr. E. J. Pratt, head of the English Department of Victoria College, Toronto, and editor of Canadian Poetry Magazine.

A prize of \$25.00, offered by the Rt. Hon. R. B. Bennett for the best poem in the first four classes, was awarded to Gordon LeClaire, 2377 St. James St., Montreal, for a lyric entitled "A Half-Caste Prays."

The Senator Patrick Burns Memorial Prize of \$15.00, offered by Mr. John Burns for the best poem on a distinctly Canadian theme, was awarded to Frederick E. Laight, 863 Queen St., Regina.

Prizes of \$5.00 for first place and \$3.00 for second were awarded as follows:

In the Sonnet Class first prize was won by W. Allister Reid, Westville, N.S., and second by John Max Allan Sutherland, 65 Parks St., St. John, N.B. Honorable mention was awarded to W. J. Cowls, Kitchener, Ont., and Sara E. Carsley, Calgary.

In the Lyric Class first prize was won by Gordon LeClaire, Montreal, and second by Helen Elizabeth Ross,

753 Wolseley Ave., Winnipeg. Honorable mention was awarded to Helen Elizabeth Ross, Winnipeg; Charles A. Tupper, Tweed, Ont.; F. Robina Monkman, 496a Ossington Ave., Toronto; A. A. Rattray, Boissevain, Man.; P. K. Page, Rothesay, N.B.; Myra A. I. Smith, Indian Head, Sask.; Sara E. Carsley, Calgary; Agnes Aston-Hill, Calgary; Elsie Fry Laurence, Edson, Alberta; and Beresford Richards, Athabasca, Alta.

In the Free Verse Class first prize was won by O. J. Stevenson, Guelph, Ont., and second by John Max Allan Sutherland, St. John, N.B. Honorable mention was awarded to A. A. Rattray, Boissevain, Man.; Wynn Ratty, Dundas, Ont.; Myra A. I. Smith, Indian Head, Sask., and Agnes Aston Hill, Calgary.

In the Short Poem any form, first prize was won by A. A. Rattray, Boissevain, Man., and second prize by Bennett Scott of Queenstown, Alta. Honorable mention was given to F. Robina Monkman, Toronto; Beresford Richards, Athabasca, Alberta; Mrs. N. F. Boyes, Plenty, Sask.; Joan Buckley, Langley Prairie, B.C., and Lettie Ann Hill, Calgary, Alberta.

In the Canadian Theme Class the prize was awarded to Frederick E. Laight, Regina, Sask. Honorable mention was given to Flos Jewell Williams, Calgary, and to Irene Greer, 209 Canora St., Winnipeg.

The Poetry Group wishes to express its grateful appreciation to Mr. Bennett and Mr. Burns, whose generous donations have been an encouragement to Canadian talent, and to the Press for its valued support.

In accordance with the rules, a book containing the poems which won prizes or honorable mention is being mailed to all contestants who paid an entry fee of fifty cents or more.

Additional copies of the book may be obtained from the Secretary of the Calgary Branch of the Canadian Authors' Association, Mrs. H. E. Downie, 233 12th Ave. N.W., Calgary, Alberta. Price 35c per copy.

# Sonnets

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## Reflections

First Prize

THE thought of you is like a crystal bowl,  
Each facet perfect in its symmetry,  
Lambent beneath the light of memory.  
Polished with gentle, musing strokes, the whole  
Reflects the care and patience and control  
Which went into your making, yet, to me,  
No crystal shaped by man could ever be,  
As flawless as the structure of your soul.  
So in the thought of you I place my trust  
And let it rest within that precious care,  
Its fluid surface now serene and still,  
The sparkling crystal kept unmarred by dust.  
Proudly I watch it gleam and shimmer there,  
And let no hand disturb it, lest it spill.

—W. Allister Reid.



**Sonnet**  
Second Prize

THE earth will never rest the same again.  
One day she may shake off the iron span,  
Upturn this ponderous masonry of man,  
And drag crushed limbs free of her giant pain—  
The strong earth always waits to speak till death—  
But fissured scars will bleed, pits gape unhealed,  
Thick hills of dust of ruins on every field  
Will still choke up her heaving gasps for breath.  
Even when at last those graves with grass grow o'er,  
That dust sucked up or blasted off with wind,  
When quiet universal reigns once more,  
Something man-made will yet be left behind—  
Some mark of man's dead earth with earth may lie  
Embowelled deep—and everlastingly.

—John Max Allan Sutherland.



## The Poor

ON narrow doorsteps, crushed by summer's heat,  
Oppressed, they swelter in the fading day,  
Complain of warmth, and talk of work and pay  
And cabbages and people on the street.

The ragged children drag their dirty feet  
Along the pavement where they needs must play.  
Too hot to run, in noisy groups they stay  
And fight when some, dishonest, try to cheat.

Do thoughts of trees that drop refreshing shade,  
Of streams that through sweet-scented gardens wind  
Make harder still the burdens that they bear?  
When will that aged one see a forest glade?  
Death gives the answer—Death is sometimes kind—  
She walks on grass and wind blows through her hair.

—W. J. Corvils.

## The Tranquil Hour

NOW comes the enchanted hour of firelit gloom,  
The harvest of the slow rich hours of day;  
Wrapped in deep peace, we watch the shadows  
play,

The flames break forth in bright fantastic bloom.  
The quiet night enfolds our quiet room,  
And lilting night-winds lightly sing and stray;  
Each honeyed moment, as it slips away,  
Leaves joy behind, a drowsy dim perfume.

Idly your fingers touch the radio—  
Across the world, the voice of murdered Spain  
Utters her anguish in a broken cry;  
Eastward, in air the thundering squadrons go,  
Blasting the crystal skies with murderous rain;  
The pitiless dawn awakes on doomed Shanghai.

—Sara E. Carsley.

# Lyrics

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## A Half-Caste Prays

R. B. Bennett Prize

"And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to  
dwell on all the face of the earth" . . .

"**F**ORGIVE, O God, the occidental anger  
Fomenting through these veins, a seething flood  
Which vies with cool of oriental languor  
To form a bristling murk in mongrel blood.

The East and West, though twain, in me commingle,  
Yet each reviles me and I brood alone—  
The earth affords no corner for my ingle,  
No pillow for my head but hatred's stone.

Why must this body, white as any mortal's,  
Forever be forsworn by eyes that slant?  
Why must this heart-bird dash convention's  
portals,  
Foredoomed as any sea-mad cormorant?

Forgive, O All-Wise Father, if I wonder  
Why You Who made of one blood humankind,  
Predestined me to be a living blunder  
In whom two separate bloods war fiercely blind.

O Christian God, I'd hail this hybrid chrism  
As one whom cleansing tongues of fire baptize,  
If You would only halt this vengeful schism—  
Subdue my soul to match these almond eyes!"

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—Gordon LeClaire.

## Little Miss April

### Second Prize

LITTLE Miss April  
Trips o'er the hills.  
See, in her basket,  
Gold daffodils,  
Tulips of scarlet,  
Hyacinths blue,  
Snowdrops, anemones,  
Violets, too.  
Tossing her basket,  
Beauty she spills  
Down in the meadows,  
Up on the hills.  
Fragrance and loveliness  
Follow her feet  
Just as once, formerly,  
Blossoms as sweet  
Bloomed in the steps of her  
Namesake of old,  
Fair Aphrodite—  
Lilies of gold,  
Starlike white moly,  
Violets blue,  
Amaranth purple,  
Crocuses, too.  
  
Out from her basket  
Beauty she spills—  
Little Miss April,  
Down from the hills.

—Helen Elizabeth Ross.

## When Love Has Spread His Wings

WHEN Love has spread his wings to fly,  
Oh, never hold him back,  
Or try to clip his shimmering wings,  
Or follow in his track.

And vain it is to gild a cage,  
Or bind with silken band,  
For better far is Love that's flown  
Than Love clutched in the hand.

—Helen Elizabeth Ross.



## I Am the Plow

I AM the plow. Look how I shave  
The black, rich earth into a wave;  
I purr my glee,  
The soil is free  
Because of me !

I am the plow. See how I lead  
The chirping birds to bounteous feed;  
I cleave with pride,  
For by my side  
With joy they cried!

I am the plow. Hear how I rasp  
The hidden rock with tearing grasp;  
With zest I bound,  
For by my sound  
The stone is found!

I am the plow. Follow behind  
And honest work you there will find;  
Sweaty your brow,  
Grip firmly now:  
I am the plow!

—Charles A. Tupper.

## Last Harbour

HE has cast anchor in this last white harbour  
Of sea-bound hearts—here through the sunset's  
flame

Long waves that break beyond the mist's gray arbour  
Shall call him still by name.

And though at dawn his ship puts forth without him  
Her prow outswung to meet the rising years,  
Still as of old the sea shall weave about him  
Her laughter and her tears.

Here as of old, across his quiet slumber  
Strong winds will herd the shadows into fold,  
And marching stars go by in endless number  
Their lances tipped with gold.

His heart will hear the tidal waters turning  
Across the breaking day, across the night,  
Stabbed with the flame of bright Polaris burning.  
Upon the distant height.

These shall be his forever now, the singing  
Of chanteys loud, the tautened cable's strain,  
And the far echo of a ship's bell ringing,  
And all the old sweet pain

Of shore-long hours, and days deep drowned in  
dreaming,  
And wide years dusky with the weft of seas,  
And maidens' smiles, and yellow tapers gleaming  
On far, familiar quays.

And though the wheeling aeons sift their sorrow  
Along the cliff, and down the swinging deep,  
These shall be his through every silver morrow:  
Hushed winds, stilled tides, and sleep!

—F. Robina Monkman.

## When Love Is Dead

WHEN Love is dead, and memory brings but pain,  
And broken dreams and hopes bring but  
regrets,

The cold dead-ashes of the years between,  
Stirred by the breath of past desire, can give  
But heartsick longing for the might-have-been.

For Love is dead. The fragile fairy thing  
We wove of gossamer and moonlit nights,  
Of youth and blown rose petals purely white,  
Star dust and rainbows, iridescent dew,  
Twilight and dawn, that peerless, perfect thing  
Is dead,—and I must walk alone.

Alone, beneath a rainfilled mournful sky  
That lours upon a chill and barren land.

Alone, the while a sougning wind wails on  
Of sadness and despair within my heart.

Alone, all gladness gone—since Love is dead.

—A. A. Rattray.



## The Moon-Child

PITY the moon-child lost in mist,  
white flowers pinned in her dank, black hair,  
she, who has walked on moonbeams long  
and breathed only silvered air.

Pity the moon-child—pale face shining,  
long slim fingers around her knees,  
eyes like velvety deep dark caverns  
lighted with stars of fire—for she's  
needful of moonbeams, who was born  
under the full moon's light,

of a mother wooed by a leprechaun  
once on a silvery night.

Pity the moon-child now no trace  
of moonbeams pierces the mist;  
pity the moon-child sitting there,  
her face by the moon unkist—  
she, who has caught the moon's bright light  
and dressed herself in its sheen;  
she, who has danced to pipes of Pan,  
a beautiful silver queen.

Weep for the moon-child, hear her moan,  
lost in the fog and cold—alone.

—P. K. Page.

## Wild Horses

WE saw them drink from a quiet stream,  
As clear as their own dark eyes;  
Their necks were arched in the sunlight's gleam  
And they were beautiful as a dream  
When they drank at dawn from a quiet stream,  
As clear as their own dark eyes.

We saw them run on the open plains  
Untouched by the whip and spur;  
The wind was soft in their tossing manes,  
The love of freedom was in their veins,  
As they ran for joy on the open plains  
Untouched by the whip and spur.

We saw them stand on a hilltop high  
With nostrils wide to the breeze,  
Their forms were graceful against the sky,  
And wild and beautiful was their cry  
As they stood at eve on a hilltop high  
With nostrils wide to the breeze.

—Myra A. I. Smith.

## Love's Farewell

COME no more, where I am laid,  
Tears and fading flowers to strew,  
Now that Death's unswerving blade  
Cleanly severs me from you.

Life was lovely to the last;  
Love was joy, for ever new;  
Now that life and love are past  
I have other things to do.

Earth resumes me; once again  
Her design must be my care;  
I shall merge in wind and rain,  
Mingle flesh and bone with her.

Busied in my task and trust,  
I am shaping, night and day,  
Beauty from the formless dust,  
Living joy from senseless clay.

Turn you to your life above;  
Love it as you used to do;  
Think no more of me, my love;  
I shall never think of you.

—Sara E. Carsley.

## Masque

I FLIRT my fan before my face  
And bid the pipers louder play.  
Upon my lips light laughter lies,  
But in my heart is dire dismay,

For silently Azraël stands,  
Forever waiting at the door—  
His sable shadow like a pall  
Upon Life's lovely shining floor.

I hear the rustle of his robe  
Above the music's measured beat.  
And oh, the sound—so sinister—  
Reminds me that the hour is fleet.

But when at last the dance is done,  
The ballroom destitute of charm,  
I may be glad to drop my fan  
And gratefully accept his arm.

—*Agnes Aston Hill.*

## Harvest

HEAP your fruits high,  
Bind up your bursting sheaves,  
Proud in your plenty, chorus your praise to God.  
Our song is wind  
Blowing through withered leaves,  
Bitter our harvest, wrenched from a barren sod.

Shall we blame heaven,  
Deaf to our desperate need,  
Sending the locust, sending the burning wind;  
Pray for our flocks,  
Dying for lack of feed,  
Cry with the prophets: "Where have thy people  
sinned?"

Was there a sign,  
Message we could not read,  
Coded in frost, tapped out in blasting hail?  
Faith in the spring,  
Follows the hidden seed:  
Is there denial, seeing the fruitage fail?

No, there lives on  
Spirit's mysterious fire.  
Failing that spark, how should our course be run—  
Humbled like dogs,  
Crushed as a toad in the mire.  
Dried by the wayside, knowing nor wheel nor sun.

Strike where you must;  
Doubt not that we shall rise,  
Sweating or frozen, we who are Adam's kin.  
We who have lost,  
Looked defeat in the eyes,  
Greatly shall triumph, bringing that harvest in.

—Elsie Fry Laurence.

## The Votaries

WHEN the great world and lesser field and grove  
Are stilled and hushed the while the blackbirds  
sing,

Then you may hear authentic voice of love  
And joy a-caroling.

Into the cup whose rim is cobalt sky  
Pouring their meed of song each ardent soul,  
Though stillness is so deep, so wide, so high,  
They fill the lucent bowl.

Then is the star of faith in beauty born,  
All falterings cease and every doubt is stilled  
In him who drinks upon a golden morn  
Nectar from love distilled.

I think that God must leave the Heavenly tent,  
Acceptance in His eyes, delight to please,  
He is too kind to be indifferent  
To those small votaries.

For Him the dawn may inspiration hold—  
Ah, most for Him to whom all loves belong—  
Lover and Laureate, the rose and gold  
Are His, and crystal song.

—Beresford Richards.

## The Magic Pipes

THE elfin pipes are playing,  
The fluting lips are near,  
As though the flowers swaying  
Made music sweet and clear:  
"Oh, listen, Lover, listen, your love is now and here!"

And say they are though lonely  
The airs the Pipers blow  
Of song that lovers only  
And Juning blossoms know:  
"In joy," the pipes are crying, "your singing feet shall go."

What measure binds the flowers  
In weaving curve and line  
Has joined these hands of ours,  
Has bound your breast to mine:  
"O Lover, hold her closer till beats her heart in thine!"

To me above you leaning  
The changeling pipes have said,  
"Her lips are not for gleaning."  
"Her mouth is warm and red."  
Distracted I, I know not what way my heart is led!

Of worship, bliss, or laughter  
The Pipers call the tune,  
And we, we follow after  
Upon the floor of June:  
"Oh, soon," the pipes are crying, "O Lover, 'twill be soon!"

But not the flowers swaying  
Make music bright as foam—  
The magic pipes are playing  
That pipe all lovers home:  
"And then," the pipes are crying, "true lovers never roam!"

—Beresford Richards.

## To the Moon

LEAN close above the trembling boughs  
Thou white and lovely moon,  
Lean close, the night is fading fast  
And daylight comes too soon.

Lean out from your bejewelled sky  
With pale, gentle hands.  
Lean out across the sleeping earth.  
Embrace the quiet sands.

Tread gently on the sapphire sea.  
Let fall your silver gown.  
Enchant the forest with its light,  
Bewitch the silent town.

Lean close above the trembling boughs,  
Thou white and lovely moon.  
Lean close, the night is fading fast  
And daylight comes too soon.

—Lotta Pierce.



## Villanelle

BETWEEN the moon and yesterday  
Two lovers met and said their say;  
With flutes and wine, two lovers met:

Two lovers met and spoke their play;  
Their mouths were bitter with regret;  
They cursed, and wished they had not met:

Between the moon and yesterday,  
I saw the fair bondwoman lay  
The torch upon the parapet;

I heard the distant horns at play;  
I saw her eyes with pity wet;  
I saw two eagles in the net:

I heard a striving spirit pray  
Where one frail candle lit the way;  
I kissed the crucifix of jet.

Between the moon and yesterday,  
Thus is the goblet decked with bay;  
So is the feast with agate set;  
With flutes and sombre wine they met.

—Neil Tracy.

# Free Verse

## The Light of Remembrance

First Prize

In a College Memorial Chapel  
For Students Who Fell in the Great War.

"Put out the light—  
And then put out the light."—Othello.

"THE light"—the flame, the spark of life through the  
quick eye,  
The body's grace, the shaping brain, the godlike will.

For these the light of life went out  
Before the candle was well lit,  
Just as the flame of youth began to glow,  
The blast of war extinguished it.

Their names are here inscribed, read them who will:  
Davies and Delamore, Harkness and Hextall,  
Powys and Singleton, Winslow, Westra, Yule,  
And many more,—so many, many more!

For them the flame of life went out  
At Paschendaele, and Vimy, Bourlon Wood, and Ypres,  
and on the Somme,  
In murky stifling dug-outs; in hospitals at dawn, in No  
Man's Land,  
Or in the fields of air while cloudless sunlight shone,  
Their light went out! But here within this vaulted room  
For nigh a score of years this light has burned

The Light of Remembrance (continued)

Daylong and nightlong still, as witness that the light  
Of these youths' lives still flames within our hearts.  
How still it is within these walls!  
But on a mellow autumn afternoon  
On yonder playing field the young athletes  
Speed to the racers' goal 'mid cheering throngs;  
And flag and pennon flutter, and young girls  
Lend charm and colour to the vibrant scene.  
And at the well-lov'd sound, sunk eyes peer forth again  
From these dim casements to behold the scenes  
In which of old they shared;  
And ghostly figures mingle with the throngs.  
But when the last shout dies away, and the dim night  
Comes on they vanish in the gloom.

Put out the light? Nay, nay, "while memory holds  
A seat in this distracted globe,"  
The light—their light—will burn with deathless flame!

—O. J. Stevenson.



## Street Passing

Second Prize

I  
N the midst  
Of a shower of noise  
It seems we meet  
In a hollow space  
In silence,  
And going past  
The warmth of our two selves  
Brushes together.  
That instant when  
Eye is drowned in eye  
Meeting the forbidden barrier,  
The risen self  
Impartial and detached  
Is aware of the nearness  
Of strange possibilities.

Then the buildings stand beyond  
And the breath has ceased.

—John Max Allan Sutherland.

## Reminiscence

AS when the fire,  
Dead upon the hearth,  
Greyed with cold ash,  
Sends out a sudden flame  
To leap and make  
A fitful, flickering light  
Within my darkened chamber's quiet gloom.

So, when across the greyness of the years,  
The errant fancy  
Wings into my heart,  
And your dear face,  
In all its loveliness,  
Leaps all unbidden from the vanished past;

Then the lost years  
Are but as yesterday,  
And the lost love  
Revives in quickened power  
Within the empty chambers of my heart.

Thus, fitfully,  
The sudden flame flares up  
And then,—Reality.  
The years obtrude,  
Only the gloom is deeper, and the pain.

—A. A. Rattray.

## "The Little Lambs"

BESIDE the dew-ponds lying dark and still  
In this dim moonless night,  
The little flap-eared stiff-legged lambs  
Press close against their Mother's fleecy sides,  
Bruising with every move the fragrant velvet thyme  
That lurks amid the grass.

A fine small rain is sighing down,  
And ever and anon the rising wind  
Sweeps through the trees,  
Bringing in gusts the music of the bells,  
The Abbey bells playing brave melodies  
To the unheeding ears of drowsy little lambs,  
Whose only music is the clanking of the bells  
Their Mothers wear.

Upon the dank grey grass they lie, their noses  
Buried in their Mothers' sides, the while they dream  
Long ecstasies of sport upon the wold  
Beneath the sweet white looseness  
Of the Summer clouds, whose shadows play  
At hide and seek amid the drifts of bluebells  
All the day.

The gentle rain has spread a coverlet of pearls  
Upon their warm crisp fleece,  
The Abbey bells have given to the winds the prayer  
"Bless thy little lambs tonight,"  
But frolic and frisk the little lambs in dreams  
Until they come to rest  
In the dim pools of soft green light  
Beneath the Beeches' youngling leaves;  
The little lambs  
The little tired lambs.

—Wynn Rutty.

## Autumn

AUTUMN comes.  
And the hills are hung  
With quiet mist.  
There are fires along the vales  
And the hungry flames  
Are quarreling with fierce delight  
Among the empty husks  
And the withered leaves.  
Nature has folded her arms  
And she dreams,  
Rememb'ring the harvest she gave.  
So shall my autumn be.  
I will gather the fruitless plans  
And the withered hopes  
And leave them to hungry flames;  
And I will sit  
In the restful solitude  
In the kindly glow of the falling sun  
And dream,  
Rememb'ring the harvest I gave.

—Myra A. I. Smith.

## Revenant

THOUGH many feet may pass  
Above me—in the quiet grass—  
Pausing a moment where  
Earth's common couch I share—  
I,  
Wrapped in the white sleep of peace,  
Shall lie,  
Nor hear them passing by. . . .

But ah, if you should come!  
I shall hear your step above the storm  
And sigh  
In deep content.  
And, I shall even know  
Your tender thought—  
"How lonely she must lie!" . . . .

And when at last  
Your footsteps fade—and pass  
Down the world's wide way,—  
I, with only the sibilant song  
Of the grass  
And the cool kisses of the rain—  
To comfort me—shall pray  
That sleep may fold me to forgetting—  
Until you come again.

—*Agnes Aston Hill.*



## Renascent Spring

DEAR, when you sent the sheaf  
Of dew-wet primroses,  
In whose cool cups  
The fragrant nectar lingers,  
You did not guess  
That their pale-petalled loveliness  
Would bring  
Such dear remembering. . . .

Strangely, the foolish tears  
Are falling—  
Across the years  
Comes a cuckoo calling . . . .  
As I caress  
Each grey-green leaf,  
I go again  
Through a soft mist of rain  
Down the perfumed paths  
Of that enchanted Spring  
When Love once walked with me,  
In Arcady.

—*Agnes Aston Hill.*



BECAUSE one ageless bird in English glen  
Where perfumed rain distilled  
His soul in rapture spilled  
Like some far-distant flute,  
And one great poet heard and hearing wrote,  
Shall I who hear the self-same note  
And long to speak because my heart is filled—  
Shall I be mute?  
Or all the birds forevermore be stilled,  
Never to sing again?

—Gertrude E. R. Shaw.

## Sea-Change

**I**F you came back to-day,  
You would find me in the garden  
Wearing the same green muslin frock  
That I had on  
The day you went away.  
I would serve you tea  
In the wild rose cup you used to like,  
And we would sit and chat  
Of flowers and books and philosophy (of a sort)  
As we used to do.  
And you would think,  
"She hasn't changed a bit!  
Here in this quiet backwater  
Her life flows on from day to day  
Untouched and unperturbed."  
You would not know  
That hope was dead,  
That faith and love were dead;  
And it was you who killed them  
Long ago.

—*Georgina Helen Thomson.*

# Short Poems

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## Nostalgia

First Prize

THE level wheat fields, shimmering in the heat,  
Roll in slow waves beneath hot puffs of wind,  
Billows of grain that, rolling, heave and fall  
Like the Atlantic swell that, after storm,  
Sweeps in slow surges on the craggy shores  
Of Orkney and the rock-bound Hebrides:  
Where cool, white mists caress the craggy peaks  
That, clad in peace and the eternal snows,  
In solitude and rugged beauty stand:  
Where soft sea winds, spray-wet, and filled with  
rain,  
Odorous of seaweed and of floating kelp,  
Bring far inland the screaming of the gulls,  
And the low booming of the breaking waves.

—A. A. Rattray.

## Intermezzo in F—A Fragment

Second Prize

"Where my caravan has rested . . . ."

MY caravan has rested by still waters;  
Even by violet water stayed in peace,  
Where palm and tulip tree forever throw  
Their dim reflections on the pool below;  
And quiet lovelinesses never cease.

I sat in silence by my open-door;  
And the long wind of evening, blowing full  
From burning sand-hills merging into grey,  
Told the slow epilogue of closing day,  
And stirred the moving shadows on the pool.

I sat in silence. And the evening came.  
The far horizon burned in living flame.  
And then was gone. And from the waste, a moan,  
The voices of eternity, the last  
Forgotten lamentation from the past,  
Or some barbaric reed-pipe hardly blown,  
Moved in an age-long echo; and my mood  
Was one with aching deep and solitude.

My heart was hungry and they brought me food,  
Honey and milk and dates; and by my door  
I built a heath fire in the wilderness;  
And became warm with loveliness, once more  
Remembering long forgotten dreams, and fires  
Of young ideals, and wandering happiness.

Intermezzo in F—A Fragment (continued) . .

~~We who have yearnings. We whose souls have~~  
spanned

Light year and aeon where the star-beams go;  
Or seen a world of caravans move slow  
To Bactria, or far-dreamed Samarcand,  
Leaving a passing footprint on the sand,  
We who are one with solitude, we know.

The night moves on. I sit alone; and brood  
In a calm quietude, a stillness made aware  
And pregnant with the dark, save only where  
The moonlight streaming misty down the sand  
With some faint elfin liveness fills the air,  
And ghostly down a ghostly sand hill creeps.  
And still the long wind of the wasteland swells  
Dark water on the pool. The camel bells  
Fall silent one by one. The desert sleeps.

—Bennett Scott.

## Penelope

LIKE melting pearls the limpid moments run  
Through valleys sweet with lavender and musk;  
The days drift slowly, sun on circling sun,  
Dusk upon opaled dusk,  
Yet through the flame of noon, the twilight's gloom,  
She turns not from her loom,  
Weaving the strand her loyal heart has spun.

Spring leans above the casements of the land  
And twines a rose among the myrtle leaves,  
Grave autumn's fingers brush the windless sand  
And swallows throng the eaves,  
Yet neither falling leaf, nor budding flower,  
Nor almond bough has power  
To draw the shining shuttle from her hand.

The waning years sinkly gently to their doom  
Upon the breast of Time's unfathomed stream,  
The saffron dawn, the tender lotus bloom  
Pass, and are but a dream,  
Yet, through night's crescent glow, the petalled spray  
Of amber-throated day,  
She moves not from the shadow of her loom.

The slow hours kiss, and trembling draw apart,  
And lost days crest the foam of tidal years,  
And tethered seasons know the age-old smart  
Of Sorrow's shaft that strikes too deep for tears;  
Yet, through the chill of shaken autumn leaves,  
And grieving winds, she weaves  
The changeless pattern of a faithful heart.

—F. Robina Monkman.

## Toil

GET up! Get up!"  
Under the crackling sun  
The leaden horses press into the dust  
Clouding beneath their feet, the crust  
Of drouth-pent earth heaves above the shares—  
But work must be done.  
The bays are black with sweat  
Their flanks foam-wet,  
Angry about their ears  
Nagging their haggard eyes  
Swarm the black flies.  
Slowly the bumping plough wheels turn  
And sun's hell fires burn and burn and burn.

The lead team slacks,  
The snaking whip-lash bites their matted backs,  
For, mile-long acres scorch and crack, the sun  
Draws all the precious life from fainting earth,  
Each blazing hour increasing dearth.  
Cost what it may in will and blood and sweat  
Work shall be done—  
They shall not forget  
That I am their god. . . .

If my God be  
As theirs, Oh! woeful is my day  
And I should pray  
That now the end of my long furrow be  
Nor wait the dusk that death unharness me.

*Beresford Richards.*



## Japanese Mood

A GRAY SKY and a gray lake—green hills beyond,  
Seen through the silvery trunks and green leaf-whorls  
Of cottonwoods, in dreaming, wistful peace,

Pinpointed with warm, intermittent rain. . . .  
Gray sand. . . . Slow-winged gulls in gray and white.  
Wet pebbles, freed of dust, glimmer and glow  
Deep red and gray, warm brown and rosy-cream.

Against the brushy banks, wet autumn flowers  
Are flecks of topaz, hints of amethyst. . . .  
All gentle-colored things reveal their life  
And loveliness, under the warm straight rain  
That wakes the woodland scents from mould and moss.

Here comes the breeze! The sun's swift glory flares,  
The wet stones glitter, and the cottonwoods—  
Festooned with diamonds. Vivid flowers blow,  
And the lake flashes blue to the blue sky.  
Even the gulls, just now so quaker clad,  
Gleam as they fly. Bird chatter fills the air;  
And children's laughter, as they run to bathe.  
Beauty, bejewelled in the glorious noon,  
Flatters this small lake of Saskatchewan!

But I have seen it in a fragrant hour  
In rare mood for our windblown prairies—still,  
A tranquil symphony of gray and green,  
And lovely as a print from old Japan.

—Mrs. N. F. Boyes.

## Nirvana

If I could be like the clover,  
Quiet and still;  
Turning from tearful pleasures,  
Forgetting my will;  
Folding my hands together,  
Softly in prayer;  
As clover leaves are folded  
From the night air:  
Then I might weave a poem  
On silence's loom,  
Delicate, sweeter than honey,  
Or clover bloom—  
If I could sweep me bare  
With God's great broom.

—Joan Buckley

## Conversation

"THE birds are singing liquid sweet.  
The Winter's gone and here's the Spring.  
That lark is lilting down the street,  
His song an ardent, shameless thing."

"Excuse my inattention, dear,  
The birds, alas, I cannot hear."

"This music is a dreamy trance  
Of melodies adroitly blended,  
But somewhat difficult to dance?  
To follow what is here intended?"

"My awkwardness, the fault, I fear—  
Music, I find so hard to hear."

"What shades of meaning and allusions  
Our friend into his talk proposes!  
How plays with words and light conclusions,  
Of argument and wit disposes!"

"So stupid of me not to hear,  
These clever nuances miss my ear."

"The guns, you see, were very proud  
To orchestrate war's dance of death.  
And through the years still very loud  
With echoes of their mighty breath.  
So jealous, were they, of the Spring,  
For us, their deaf, no birds must sing."

—Lettie Ann Hill.

## The Old Mine

HIGH on some wilderness hillside you will find  
A caving tunnel with rotten timber lined,  
Driven into the heart of the stony hill  
By human muscles urged by human will;  
Driven by wild expectancy of men it killed.  
What hopes lie buried here, what dreams  
Of wealth, to bring long sought for, unknown ease?  
What visions of golden power, what multiple schemes?  
Who were the men who felled and trimmed these trees?  
It is a fitting tomb for all these things,  
For the lives as hard as the rocks upon its floor,  
For the dreams and desires which are man's only wings;  
Where sweet wild rose and buckthorn hide the door.

—Norman Moodie.

# Canadian Theme

## Soliloquy

Senator Patrick Burns' Memorial Prize

I HAVE seen tall chimneys without smoke,  
And I have seen blank windows without blinds,  
And great dead wheels, and motors without minds,  
And vacant doorways grinning at the joke.

I have seen loaded wagons creak and sway  
Along the roads into the North and East,  
Each dragged by some great-eyed and starving  
beast  
To God knows where, but just away—away.

And I have heard the wind, awake at nights  
Like some poor mother left with empty hands,  
Go whimpering in the silent stubble lands  
And creeping through bare houses without lights.

These comforts only have I for my pain—  
The frantic laws of statesmen bowed with cares  
To feed me, and the slow, pathetic prayers  
Of Godly men, that somehow it shall rain.

—Frederick E. Laight.

## Alberta Harvest

ALL day we drove between the ripened grain,  
Where shadow lay on stook, and stook on shadow,  
With here and there a black field, lying fallow.  
Thank God for rain.

This is our harvest, born of years of pain.  
Forgotten is the cutting thrust of hail,  
When frustrate harvest, torn beneath its flail,  
Is turned to earth again.

Forgotten the cool nights we hold our breath,  
Because, above the fields, the moon is round,  
And all the golden harvest in the ground  
Awaits black death.

And we forget grasshoppers, drought, and rust;  
The years of blasted hopes, of blazing heat,  
~~Of~~ poverty, fierce cold, and cruel defeat,  
And smothering dust.

Now, all Alberta has been turned to gold.  
The poplar brush beats out its golden light,  
And all the sparkling sloughs are burnished bright,  
With gold they hold;

Red gold of flax, the tawny gold of wheat,  
The silver gold of oats, lie on a cloth of gold,  
Which, far as eye can reach, we see unrolled,  
Blazing in Autumn heat.

—Flos Jewell Williams.

## Mount Assiniboine

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SPLENDID and cold,  
Jewelled with snow  
You are not of kind earth  
Where flowers grow.

You saw a vision  
Of ultimate space;  
A comet wooed you  
With terrible grace.

And now in your loneliness,  
Haughty and high  
Wordless you wait  
For him flashing by.

—Irene Greer.

## Trekkers

I USED to watch them winding down the road  
With covered wagon, cattle, all they'd own  
Trailing behind. Thin horses pulled the load.  
Northward they went, leaving for land unknown.  
I used to wish that I could go along  
On new land, with new folks, my way to make.  
Most times they drove in silence; then, a song  
Told of young hearts, even hailstones couldn't break.

And mostly they were old—in middle-life  
After vain years of farming, forced to roam  
A broken man, some kids, a sad-faced wife  
Facing the world again, to build a home.  
They'd stop in for a drink,—to ask the way,  
And Ma would pester them with questions kind.  
"It doesn't matter where we go," they'd say,  
"It can't be worse than what we've left behind."

They told of years of pests, weeds, hail and dust,  
And years of waiting for reluctant rain.  
One wagon read, "PEACE RIVER NOW OR BUST"  
And young lads waved to me, and smiled again.  
They saw a shy-faced youngster through the wire  
Watch, wistful-eyed, their shabby caravan,  
Dead sick of lean years, too,—and heart afire  
To climb up there, beside that driving man.

Often we'd stand and watch them out of sight,  
And Dad would say, "Perhaps, another year,  
If rain don't come and prospects look more bright,  
We'll have to be a-pullin' out of here."  
And Ma, still watching them, would wipe her eye  
(O'er distant hills the clumsy wagon rolled)  
"When folks get old, they like at home to die;  
Poor souls!" she'd whisper low to me, "Poor souls!"

—L. Lewis.